COMPETITION.—Plans, &c., are wanted for the erection of a workhouse for the Fulham Poor-law Union, capable of accommodating 450 inmates; the architect whose plan shall be approved of to be employed on the usual per centage, or to receive 50 guineas,—second and third in merit 30 and 20 guineas respectively, when plan selected.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE.—Mr. Blore, it seems, is now accused of having pirated the design of the new façade to Buckingham Palace. According to Mr. Sharp, an architect at York—who has addressed a letter on the subject to the *Civil Engineer and Architect's Journal*—it is merely "a reduced copy" of the Palace at Caserta, erected about the middle of the last century by Vanvitelli. "The faults or merits, be they which they may," he says, "are not Mr. Blore's, but Vanvitelli's." The *Athenæum* remarks on this,—"Considering the heavy faults that have been charged against Mr. Blore's alteration, it is probable that Mr. Blore may not be unwilling to avail himself of a charge of plagiarism which he would otherwise have indignantly repelled,—all the more because Caserta occupies a foremost rank among the architectural achievements of the last century. That edifice, however, owes its celebrity rather to its vastness as a mass than to either nobleness or elegance of style or greatness of manner. Mr. Blore's building, on the contrary, is altogether deficient in the imposing quality of vastness—consequently in that which constitutes the chief "merit" of Vanvitelli's pile and renders it an impressive object." A correspondent writes to us as follows:—Mr. Editor: I recollect an observation by a late deceased architect, "that it was utterly impossible for an architect to make a satisfactory design unless he tried the general effect in a perspective sketch previous to carrying it into execution." Without wishing to prejudge Buckingham Palace, I would ask this plain question—Did the architect take this into consideration? For if he had, would he have committed such incongruities as present themselves, when there was so favourable an opportunity of giving character and outline to the palace and wings, by raising them above the other masses, and by introducing a good style of window, instead of those *slits* throughout. It is much to be regretted that by those who had the controlling of the design this was lost sight of. I make these observations more as a hint to young architects than from a disposition to censure.—A SUNSCRINER.

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN GUARDS AND PASSENGERS.—Sir: There is one objection common to all the proposed means of communication between railway passengers and the guards, and which makes the Companies hesitate to adopt some plan otherwise excellent. The difficulty is this, that none of them provide any *sure check on the temptation to give false alarm*. One man among many could, of course, be pointed out by those in the same carriage; but—especially in first-class carriages—a passenger is often alone in a division, and then the more disposed to nervousness, or, perhaps, to mischief. Allow me to suggest that the objection may probably be removed by an adaptation of the very simple and effective contrivance, in use at the Pentonville Prison, for enabling a prisoner on the separate system to give notice, in case of sickness, to the officer in the long corridor. By turning a handle inside the cell, a rod through the wall throws open, at right angles, a metal label, on which is the number of the cell, and, at the same time, rings a bell common to all; so that the officer, at any distance, can see quickly where he is wanted. In its application to railway trains, for the purpose of striking a bell on the engine or near the guard, there should be attached permanently, to the upper edge of one side of each carriage, a slight iron rod (like a luggage rail), capable of being moved freely in the suspending eyes by a handle within the carriage. At each end of the rod a short chain should hang; and when the carriages are connected as usual by the coupling chains, these small chains should (and could in a moment) be linked also. Labels should open, as at the prison, and be kept open by springs, to inform the guard the point of danger, and for the sure detection of a false alarmist, by night or day.

Lambeth. JOHN J. COLE.

NORFOLK AND NORWICH ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—The report of the committee, read at the second anniversary meeting of the Society, held last week, gave a satisfactory account of the Society's progress. This was exhibited in the steady increase of members (now more than 350), more frequent communications, and in the readiness with which possessors of objects of antiquarian interest had lent them for exhibition. These results were, the committee considered, partly attributable to the impulse given by the late visit of the Archæological Institute to Norwich, many of the leading members of which had joined this society, and promoted its objects. The committee stated that they had elected the following antiquaries honorary members of the society:—The Marquis of Northampton, Lord Mahon, Lord Albert Conyngham, Lord Braybrooke, Sir Francis Palgrave, Professor Willis, Mr. Albert Way, Mr. Henry Hallam, Mr. J. Britton, Mr. Pugin, Mr. Edward Hawkins, and also the Mayors of Norwich, Yarmouth, and Lynn. Mr. Harrod read a paper "On some ancient shields in the ceiling of the south aisle of St. Nicholas Church, at Yarmouth," by Mr. T. W. King, Rouge Dragon, in the College of Arms, to whom the shields had been confided to be re-emblazoned. The Rev. R. Hart read a paper "On Thomas Walsingham's account of Litester's Rebellion, and how it was quelled by the warlike Bishop of Norwich;" and the Rev. James Bulwer made some illustratory remarks on several drawings of mural paintings in Crostwick Church, which were exhibited on the walls of the room. One of them represented the Seven Cardinal Sins, another St. Michael and Dragon; others, the Betrayal of Christ in the Garden, the Crucifixion, &c. There were more paintings on the walls of the church, the subjects of which were not distinguishable. They have been lately discovered by clearing away the plaster which covered them.

BIRMINGHAM SCHOOL OF DESIGN.—An address issued by the Committee of the Society of Arts and Government School of Design in Birmingham, shews that the school has now been in active operation upwards of four years. There are at present on the books 355 male and 135 female pupils, in all 490. The attendance is regular, and the conduct and improvement of the pupils gratifying. A grant of 350*l.* has during the last year been applied, with the sanction of the Board of Trade, in aid of the expenses of the school; but the subscriptions from the town and neighbourhood have not exceeded 260*l.* for the same period. The utility of such an institution is obvious. It is calculated to refine the taste of the inhabitants of the town by diffusing a knowledge of art; to improve the trade and manufactures by developing and cultivating talent for design; to raise the tone of morals by affording an opportunity of passing the evenings in the pursuit of a useful and elegant branch of study in the school, and by supplying the means of intellectual improvement in the lending library. Besides the pupils admitted gratuitously on the recommendation of a subscriber (each nominating one for every 1*l.* 1s. subscribed), the low price of admission (10s. annually to each female, and 12s. to each male student) renders its advantages accessible to a large portion of the less wealthy classes.

THE ANCIENT MONUMENT IN TRAFALGAR-SQUARE.—Some of our contemporaries have been foolish enough to believe that the sculptured tablets for the base of the Nelson monument had been sent to Woolwich to be cast, and that there really was a chance of seeing this unlucky monument of many things, finished before they die. In truth, however, we believe there is nothing yet ready for the caster, nor likely to be for some time to come. What in the world our able friend Mr. Grissell has been amusing himself with on the steps for these many months past, it would puzzle us to tell. We shall suggest to his late partner, the excellent member for Norwich, to move for a return of the "days that have passed" since the men began to work there, distinguishing those when one mason was employed from those when there was none. A fondness for *hoarding* seems not restricted to the precious metals.

UTRECHT CHURCH. — This curious old structure has been burnt down, through defects in the stoves it is thought.

PROGRESS IN CHESTER. — Our correspondent at Chester writes as follows:—We are proceeding with the sewerage of the place as fast as the funds placed at our disposal will allow, and I think it can be shewn cheaper than in any other place. We are now engaged in cleansing our courts, alleys, &c., and in removal of all nuisance likely to prove injurious to health. An improved system of cleansing the streets has also been suggested, and we are carrying out an improved mode of paving, both of which, if generally adopted, will also be conducive to health. A cemetery company has also been formed, under influential auspices, so that, in all probability, intra-mural interments will be abolished; but I object to the system of establishing joint-stock companies of this character, as these institutions ought to be "*pro bono publico*" exclusively. This system, to be carried out perfectly, will entail the necessity of closing up, with a seal, all the old graveyards, which will, of course, require a much larger capital than 5,000*l.*, the sum named to accomplish that object. We are trapping all our street gratings, and our sewers we are ventilating by passing the rain water-spouts into them, which, if not the most effective way, is the cheapest. It is useless to trap sewers unless you afford the means for the escape of the noxious gases generated in them. We want a better and cheaper supply of both water and gas.

SOMETHING IN FAVOUR OF THE LIGHT AND HEALTH TAX.—Sir James Wylie mentions the recurrence of certain virulent diseases in a spacious barrack at St. Petersburgh, where the victims of epidemic were three to one on the dark side of the edifice when compared with those who perished on the light side. Upon the same principle, it has been declared by Dr. Edwards, that deformed children are frequently the consequence of their parents having resided in obscure cellars. Dupuytren, indeed, is said to have demonstrated on more than one occasion the extraordinary connection existing between disease and darkness.—At a meeting of the inhabitants of St. Pancras, held on Tuesday evening last, to agree upon a petition for the repeal of the tax, one of the speakers illustrated the inequality of this tax by showing that while two houses in Soho-square, that paid 34*l.* rent, paid 14*l.* a year window tax, two houses in St. Anne's-court, near the square, that paid 66*l.* rent, paid 18*l.* 1s. 2d. a year window tax.

INTERIOR OF LINGFIELD CHURCH.—A great commotion may be raised by a very trifling occurrence when the elements of disorder exist. We incidentally wrote but two lines, saying the interior of Lingfield Church, Surrey, was "not very satisfactorily restored" (nothing very violent in this), and lo! eight communications were the result. One from the architect who had been engaged in restoring the outside of the church, disclaiming any connection with the inside; another from the respected incumbent, stating that the parishioners were very well satisfied with it, we inserted. The architect's disclaimer, and the inference that the restoration was made without professional assistance, speak volumes. We have since received the following complaint, of another sort, from Mr. W. G. Rogers, the well-known carver. He says:—"Sir: In the early part of last year (1847) I was waited on by the Rev. R. F. Fuller, rector of St. Peter's, Lingfield, Surrey, respecting the carved decorations for the church, such as reredos, altar-rail, pulpit, and reading-desk. I made three journeys to the church, took the several measurements, and, assisted by the clergyman and churchwardens, suggested several plans to appropriate some of the old screen-work, made a set of sketches, and one large full-sized drawing of one of the headings of the reredos with the chairs. On the 23rd of June I received a letter from the rector, desiring me to be in the way to receive the churchwardens, who would call on me about the carving,—but they have not yet called on me. I wrote, and received no answer: about a month after I wrote again, and then received an answer that the church was finished by some drill-carving machine. Will you do me the favour to notice this in your future paper and say if it is right that my time should be thus invaded by churchwardens hunting up for *cheap* church-carving decorations?"

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